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## The Case Against Non-Conformity

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# *Viewpoint and Comment*

## The Case Against Non-conformity

To be a successful college student these days it appears that an attitude of skepticism toward established academic convention is necessary. Current arguments for change in educational systems seem to stem from the observation that present education has become stagnant in relation to the amount of scientific knowledge which a student must acquire to be competent in his profession.

Although this argument should not go unchallenged, the consensus of educators is that changes in educational systems must occur if academic standards are to be maintained. But what of the ultimate application of the education acquired by a veterinary student? Upperclassmen seem to think that most of it goes for naught. They reason that by using modern drugs it is possible for a practitioner to successfully treat many disease conditions symptomatically, without bothering to give the animal a physical examination and probably without the aid of any diagnostic tools.

It takes only minimal logic for the veterinary student to deduce that if veterinarians are not taking advantage of the scientific knowledge available to them, there is no justification for obtaining new technological information through research; hence, there is no need for the veterinary student to concern himself with mastering vast quantities of subject matter. These sentiments are exemplified by the thought, "Now that I'm across the street the pressure is off, they won't fail me."

The wide spread subscription to this attitude results in indignant reaction whenever these students feel they are being imposed upon or feel they are forced to endure courses for which no application seems apparent. As underclassmen, such assignments would have caused nearly the same reaction, but would have been done quickly and to the best of the student's ability. After an honest appraisal, upperclassmen can find worthwhile aspects to any unpleasant task which befit them earlier. Might it be possible that by his own rigorous application to the veterinary curriculum and the manner in which it is presented, a veterinary student could distinguish himself from a technician?

J.W.V.B.